



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 40th Field Artillery
6050 Rothwell Street
Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503-6200

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

27 October 2014

Commander, Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 40th Field Artillery

Dear Parents, Family Members, and Friends:

Hello, my name is Captain Pedro J. Negron and I am the Commander of Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 40th Field Artillery. First, I would like to say that it is truly an honor to lead these young men and women through their Basic Combat Training here at Fort Sill. Your Soldier is now nearing the completion of the first step in their journey as a United States Army Soldier. Over the past weeks your Soldier has been training vigorously to achieve the standard to graduate from Basic Combat Training and I commend their diligence. I would like to personally thank you for keeping your Soldier motivated and dedicated towards achieving their goals throughout the previous weeks. Your Soldier has come a long way since their arrival here at Fort Sill and we are excited to see them graduate from Basic Combat Training.

Basic Training Graduation is an important milestone for all Soldiers. I encourage families and friends to attend the Family Day festivities and of course, the Graduation Ceremony if possible. Graduation will undoubtedly be an event that is forever etched into their memories and having family and friends on-hand to experience the occasion makes the event even more memorable. Graduation and Family Day also afford family and friends the opportunity to experience the Basic Combat Training environment first-hand and more importantly the opportunity to visit with your Soldier prior to their departure for AIT. While your Soldier is here at Basic Combat Training, he or she will experience things that may be completely foreign to them. There will be very early mornings to be followed by very long days. The training we conduct here will test your Soldier's strength, endurance, and will. They will learn how to fire their assigned weapon, perform first aid, and navigate terrain by way of compass and map. These are but just a few of the tasks that your Soldier will complete during their tenure at Basic Training. They will also learn the fundamentals of drill and ceremony along with military customs and courtesies in order to instill discipline and order. You may receive phone calls from them expressing stress and discontent over the rigors of training. I would urge you to encourage your Soldier when they are exhausted mentally and physically. We push and encourage them here but it always helps to hear it from loved ones.

You can rest easy knowing that your Soldier is being trained by the best Non-Commissioned Officers serving in the Army today. These Non-Commissioned Officers are known as Drill Sergeants. The Drill Sergeant is the epitome of professionalism and will train your Soldier to exceed the standard. These Drill Sergeants are the front line in the transformation from civilian to Soldier. The Alpha Battery Drill Sergeants will be with your Soldier every day and night to train, coach, and mentor. It is their duty to prepare your Soldier for their first duty assignment and eventually combat.

Your Soldier's safety is paramount in my command. The Drill Sergeants and I take every precaution necessary to insure that your Soldier is safe. Whether it is conducting a 16 kilometer

road march or throwing live hand grenades, rest assured that there are safety measures in place. We are also here to look after your Soldier's general well being. If your Soldier is ill or having personal problems we will get them the proper treatment they require.

Once again thank you for your sacrifice and welcome to the Avengers Team and the United States Army Family. To see the progress of your Soldier, please visit our public website at <http://sill-www.army.mil/434/1-40/1-40f.html> or you can visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Alpha-Battery-1-40th-FA-Avengers/345787618830581>

Should an emergency arise, the best means of notifying a Soldier in training is through your local American Red Cross. The field office in your vicinity will contact the Lawton field office, which will then contact me.

Your Soldier is expected to graduate from Basic Combat Training at **10:00 a.m. on Friday, 14 November 2014**. We invite you to attend your Soldier's graduation ceremony. The graduation ceremony will take place at **McMahon Auditorium Lawton, OK 73507**. Because your Soldier will be in training, you will not be able to see him/her until **Thursday, 13 November at 9:00 a.m.** The Battery will host Family Day activities at **Battery Area** to demonstrate the skills your Soldier has learned in the past 10 weeks. After the Family Day activities, Soldiers may be granted a local pass to visit with family and friends from **11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.** *If you and your loved ones are traveling by airplane to come to family day and graduation day, I highly encourage and recommend you to buy a refundable air ticket just in case any situation may arise; we operate in a dynamic environment where changes can occur on occasion.*

Family members and other guests are responsible for all of their own travel arrangements. Lawton has its own airport as well as Oklahoma City (approximately 1.5 hrs from Fort Sill). Check both locations, airfare varies between both airports. If you fly into the Lawton-Fort Sill Regional Airport, I suggest you rent a car or take a taxi as a means of transportation to your hotel and graduation activities. The airport has a limited supply of rental cars, so make your reservations early. If rooms are available, you can stay in the on-post transient lodging, Geronimo Lodge. To stay on post you must make your reservations in advance by calling **1-877-711-8326**. Please be prepared to provide the reservation clerk with the name and rank of the Soldier that you will be visiting while on Fort Sill. Our on-post lodging facilities are located very close to the Field Artillery Training Center.

On occasion, trainees fail to graduate within the usual 10-week period. Therefore, if your Soldier has not been in contact with you, we ask that you please contact the battery approximately 1-2 weeks prior to graduation. At that point, we will be able to tell you whether or not your Soldier is on track to graduate with the rest of the class.

Some Important Notes:

- 1) The Soldiers will be very busy the last few days before graduation. I kindly ask that you do not make attempts to see your Soldier before Family Day Activities. Your Soldier will be very busy and will not be released or allowed to see friends or family prior to that time.

- 2) Fort Sills gates are guarded at all times. Please ensure that you maintain up-to-date insurance and proof of such as well as proper vehicle registration prior to entering Fort Sills gates; also every adult is required to provide identification to gain entry to Fort Sill so please have the identification ready as you approach the gates. Operation of cell phones while operating a motor vehicle is prohibited on Fort Sill and subject to a fine; hands free devices (i.e. BlueTooth are authorized as long as only one ear is utilized) or you can pull over and come to a complete stop if you must utilize your cell phones. Fort Sill is also a federally controlled installation; weapons are not authorized in vehicles or on persons while on Fort Sill.
- 3) Soldiers will not be allowed to travel home or to Advanced Individual Training (AIT) location with family members.
- 4) Soldiers with an MOS: 13B, 13D, 13F, will be staying at Fort Sill after graduation to conduct Advanced Individual Training will be transported by the unit for in-processing the 1-78 FA BN. The 1-78 FA BN command reserves their right to release the Soldiers for pass until in-processing is completed.
- 5) Soldiers with an MOS: 14 series MOS that will remain at Fort Sill after graduation to conduct Advanced Individual Training and will be transported by the unit after graduation and will be in-processing 6th ADA BDE. The new unit command reserves their right to release the Soldiers for pass privileges.
- 6) It is permissible to photograph and videotape graduation activities, however this permission does not extend to the rest of Fort Sill. While photography is allowed of ceremonies and family or social events, unrestricted videotaping and photography by the public on the installation is prohibited. However, photography is allowed of historical exhibits at the Fort Sill Museum, including those which are outdoors, but prohibited near family quarters and office buildings. You are welcome to bring a camera to the graduation, but please exercise caution and do not point it in the direction of installation facilities, buildings and military equipment which are not part of the graduation activities. Also, GPS "tagging" of photos that can pinpoint locations on the installation is not authorized; this includes "tagging" from all social media outlets (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, etc).
- 7) Please be aware that your Soldier will have travel arrangements made by the Army to go to their next duty station. Please check with your Soldier prior to making your own travel arrangements.
- 8) The importance and value of mail to your Soldier is immeasurable during this phase of their career. We ask that you use this venue to encourage your Soldier during their time in IET, but we also ask that you limit the food products that you send to your Soldier. Gift boxes/baskets of food or any other form of food received from you (ALTHOUGH ALLOWED) will greatly increase the morale of your Soldier, but in turn creates discipline and other potential problems. We ask for your assistance in this matter and your help is greatly appreciated.

If I can be of assistance in any matter relating to your new Soldier, please feel free to write or call me. The office is open 24 hours a day. Our mailing address is Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion,

40th Field Artillery, 6050 NE Rothwell Street, Fort Sill, Oklahoma 73503. The battery telephone number is (580) 442-1210 (we cannot accept collect calls).

Thank you for supporting your Soldier. We look forward to seeing you soon.

//ORIGINAL SIGNED//
PEDRO J. NEGRON
Captain, US Army
Commanding

AGENDA

Thursday, 13 November 2014

9:00 a.m - 10:30 a.m	Family Day Activities at Battery Area
10:30 a.m - 8:00 p.m	Family Day Pass (ALL SOLDIERS)
8:00 p.m	Accountability Formation (ALL SOLDIERS)

Friday, 14 November 2014

10:00 a.m- 11:00 a.m	Graduation at McMahon Auditorium
11:00 am – 8:00 p.m	Graduation Day Pass (ALL SOLDIERS minus 13/14 MOS Soldiers)
8:00 p.m- UTC	Accountability Formation/Out-Processing at Alpha Battery

***Passes are NOT overnight. Soldiers must be present at 8:00 PM for the Accountability Formation.**

****Doors will open at McMahon Auditorium at 0945 for Graduation Day.**